

**Communicating an Established Brand to a New Audience:
Strategic Communications Plan**

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About the author

Blake Derrick grew up in Hudson, WI. He attended Bethany Lutheran College for two years where he completed his general studies. From there, his desire to study public relations and marketing brought him to Minnesota State University, Mankato. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Media with minors in Communication Studies and Technical Communication in May of 2014. Currently, he is a Social Media Coordinator for Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota (BBB).

Blake will use this project as an opportunity to apply what he learned in graduate school where he studied strategic communication at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. This capstone demonstrates how a strategic communications plan can be used to shape a more favorable perception of BBB.

Executive summary

The purpose of my capstone is to create a more favorable perception of Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota, increase brand awareness among key stakeholders and the public, and increase relevance among new adults. By “new adults,” I mean college students ages 18-22 and prospective and current homeowners ages 22-34. Key stakeholders include BBB staffers, our Board of Directors, BBB Accredited Businesses, prospective Accredited Businesses, and the public at large.

The following document describes how I developed a multi-faceted strategic communications plan for BBB. My plan was created Using the R-PIE strategic planning process, which is an acronym for research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The research section of my plan starts by identifying the current problems faced by BBB. Then, I performed a comprehensive situational and SWOT analysis to identify the internal and external factors and future opportunities. In the planning section, I outline a set of objectives that demonstrate how communication can help Better Business Bureau achieve a more favorable perception and increased brand awareness. The implementation section explains how BBB will reach those objectives through communication using a mixed media approach. The last section of my capstone describes how success will be measured throughout each phase of my communications plan.

Background

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota (BBB) is a non-profit organization founded by Twin Cities business owners in 1912; Ethical business leaders who assembled to combat misleading advertising and create a fair marketplace for businesses and consumers. The movement is strong and continues to grow. There are now more than 100 BBBs throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Better Business Bureau's mission is to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust.

The following information was gathered from a document originally curated by our Communications Manager. The purpose of this document is to remind local reporters and inform the public at large about what BBB does and does not do (discussed later), and the services and programs we offer to consumers and businesses.

Services offered to consumers and businesses

BBB provides a variety of tools, resources and programs to consumers and businesses. The yearly investment from nearly 7,300 BBB Accredited Businesses makes it possible for the organization to offer most of its services and programs free of charge to the public.

Business Profiles. Consumers and businesses can view reports on companies they are considering doing business with by visiting bbb.org. Business Profiles include consumer complaint history, verified customer reviews, and ratings (on a scale from A+ to F). This information is valuable to consumers seeking to make informative purchasing decisions.

Conciliation Services. When consumers experience a marketplace issue with a business, BBB works with them and the business to try and come to a mutually agreeable resolution.

Community Mediation Center. BBB also offers mediation and arbitration services. It also coordinates the organization's Lemon Law Program, which resolves warranty disputes with participating automobile manufacturers.

BBB Scam Tracker. A free interactive tool that helps consumers and businesses learn about and report the latest schemes targeting our region.

Institute for Marketplace Ethics. Our educational foundation educates and provides free resources to seniors, service members and students that help increase financial literacy, make wise purchasing decisions, and avoid scams.

BBB's mission is driven by the Board of Directors, 38 full-time staffers, and supported by nearly 7,300 Accredited Businesses that uphold its high standards. BBB's Eight Standards for Trust is a framework designed to help businesses create and maintain trust in the marketplace.

Table 1 Eight Standards for Trust Source: bbb.org/en/us/standards-for-trust			
Build trust Establish and maintain a positive track record in the marketplace.	Advertise Honestly Adhere to established standards of advertising and selling.	Tell the Truth Honestly represent products and services, including clear and adequate disclosures of all material terms.	Be Transparent Openly identify the nature, location, and ownership of the business, and clearly disclose all policies, guarantees and procedures that bear on a customer's decision to buy.
Honor Promises Abide by all written agreements and	Be Responsive Address marketplace	Safeguard Privacy	Embody Integrity Approach all business dealings,

verbal representations.	disputes quickly, professionally, and in good faith.	Protect any data collected against mishandling and fraud, collect personal information only as needed, and respect the preferences of consumers regarding the use of their information.	marketplace transactions and commitments with integrity.
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Brand definition

Better Business Bureau (BBB) is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization that focuses on its mission of being the leader in advancing marketplace trust. Supported by a network of trusted BBB Accredited Businesses, the organization offers free tools and resources that help empower people to make wise purchasing decisions.

Brand promise

To build trust among consumers, brands and charities. BBB accomplishes this by establishing and monitoring ethical marketplace standards and behavior; providing consumer guidance, education and support; and offering resources to the business community.

Core value proposition

BBB helps people find brands and charities they can trust. BBB's mission is to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust.

What I learned

Throughout this program and by completing my capstone, I learned how to create, implement and track the success of a strategic communications plan. The research data helped me discover where Better Business Bureau resides in the mind of our target audiences and where the organization fits into the consumer journey. Better Business Bureau is a complex organization in that it strives to be everything to everyone. When every audience is a priority, no one is. Using data and inside expertise, I took a step towards solving that problem by homing in on specific audience segments. My goal is to provide BBB with a strategic communications plan it can use once our marketing budget is approved.

Methodology

To determine the current perception of the organization from the perspective of key stakeholders (BBB Accredited Businesses, non-accredited businesses, consumers, and the public), I conducted qualitative research by engaging in social media listening. I leveraged this data to inform the strategic direction of my communications plan. Social media listening also inspired creative direction and messages that will resonate with new adults.

Consumer data was drawn from a secondary study conducted by Nielsen and BBB in 2016. This data includes purchase behavior, demographics and psychographics that were collected from 2,083 respondents who are familiar with Better Business Bureau. Insights from this data will be used to inform media decisions during the implementation phase of my communications plan.

I will solve this problem through communication by shaping more favorable beliefs and attitudes of Better Business Bureau in the mind of key stakeholders while

also expanding their brand knowledge. My communications plan will accomplish this by implementing a mix of paid, earned, shared, and owned media to catch target audiences during key moments of receptivity. By definition, moments of receptivity “Identify the moments or places consumers will be more receptive to the messaging” (Young, 2014).

My plan will incorporate core principles of communication to shape a more favorable perception of the organization. This communications plan will also recommend opportunities for the organization to engage with and provide more brand experiences to consumers and businesses. I will later discuss how BBB can use the principles of communication to: 1) Tap into moments of receptivity when our audiences are open to being engaged; 2) Create messages that are easily understood and relevant to the intended recipient and 3) encourage a response from the recipient and identify opportunities to create ongoing dialogue.

Before BBB can successfully promote its services in key markets, our target audiences will first need to understand the purpose of the organization. Therefore, I would recommend that BBB develops and implements two separate campaigns. The first campaign will focus on awareness to elevate brand knowledge among key constituencies. Once a higher level of brand awareness is established, BBB can then promote its consumers and business services.

Research

Problems faced by the organization

Brand knowledge. There's a misunderstanding about Better Business Bureau's identity, what the organization does and does not do, and common misconceptions that it could put more focus on addressing. Though BBB has been around for more than 100 years, misconceptions surrounding the organization remain an obstacle to achieving relevance and higher favorability among key constituencies. For BBB, these common misconceptions reveal that stability in the marketplace doesn't necessarily translate to relevance.

Misconceptions about BBB Ratings. In the eyes of some, BBB has lost some credibility since its ratings system was introduced in 2008. A big part of that scrutiny stems from a detrimental 2010 ABC News investigation on the Southland chapter of the Los Angeles Better Business Bureau. This BBB chapter was accused and found guilty of running a pay-to-play scheme, where a non-existent company "earned" an A minus rating. This created a problem for all Better Business Bureaus because the negative news exposure severely damaged the organization's reputation and credibility. After a two-year investigation, Los Angeles BBB was expelled for its actions.

Fortunately, the Minnesota-North Dakota chapter of Better Business Bureau was given an opportunity to set the record straight on KSTP-TV immediately after the 20/20 investigation was aired nationally. The Communications Manager also wrote and published a blog regarding the incident.

Here's an excerpt from that blog:

“Though we wish 20/20 had discovered the Better Business Bureau was perfect, that’s not realistic. Very few, if any, organizations of our size can withstand the kind of close examination a news program like this brings to the fore without some faults being revealed. But as a non-profit organization that prides itself on transparency and seeks to model ethical behavior, we especially must welcome this kind of scrutiny. And if that scrutiny reveals flaws – as it has – we must learn from it. Trust is paramount in our line of work” (Reference figure 1b. in the appendix section to read the full blog post).

Though this was an isolated incident that took place nearly eight years ago, BBBs nationwide continue to experience backlash regarding business ratings. The story cemented a false belief in the minds of some consumers and members of the business community that business owners must pay BBB to receive a satisfactory rating. That is simply not true. Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota maintains information on tens of thousands of non-accredited businesses that maintain a satisfactory rating. Despite that, some people and news outlets continue to echo the “pay-to-play” rhetoric, using 20/20’s 2010 investigation as the seed.

In January, Big Baller Brand (the other BBB) earned an F rating after failing to properly address complaints involving delayed shipping issues and unreceived merchandise during the holidays. In an interview with ESPN, the founder and owner of Big Baller brand commented on Better Business Bureau’s rating system by saying, “Better Business Bureau is as outdated as the Yellow Pages. Who cares about them? Tell them that Yelp! has replaced the Better Business Bureau. We honestly thought

the Better Business Bureau was out of business. The new BBB stands for the Big Baller Brand.”

While that comment was damaging enough, Maxim jumped on the bandwagon by agreeing with Ball and topped things off by so eloquently saying that “Better Business Bureau is largely bullsh*t.” In the footnotes of Maxim’s article, they defend their comment by citing CNNMoney’s assessment that BBB’s rating system is “seriously flawed.” That understanding is based on their disagreement on the factors affecting BBB ratings.

Most of the unfavorable press coverage BBB has received has revolved around ratings. My communications plan proposes to combat that false narrative by demonstrating to people that BBB ratings are credible and relevant to consumers looking for a business they can trust.

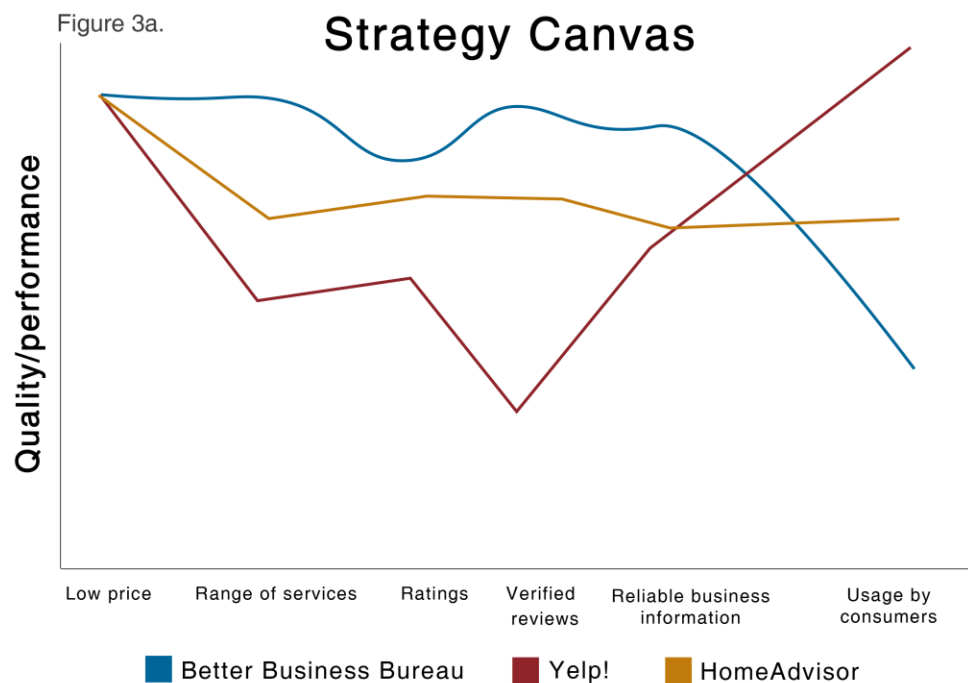
Perception that BBB is outdated: “Yelp for old people – irrelevant.”

Social media listening confirmed the widespread belief that Better Business Bureau is, in the eyes of some, an outdated organization that is no longer relevant to consumers and businesses. BBB positions itself as a go-to source that empowers consumers, young and old, to make wise purchasing decisions.

Situational analysis

Competitive set. Better Business Bureau's competitive set is HomeAdvisor/Angie's List and Yelp! The factors considered among competitors in the category are low price, range of services, a reliable source for information, ratings, customer reviews, and usage by consumers.

The purpose of drawing a strategy canvas is to identify and capitalize on untapped markets your competition is missing (Propel Growth, 2018). Figure 3 highlights the competitive advantages and opportunities for Better Business Bureau to consider in the future.



Usage by consumers

Yelp! dominates this competitive category by a long shot. In 2016, Yelp! generated 28 million average unique mobile application visitors, 74 million unique mobile web visitors, and 83 million unique desktop visitors. In comparison, 4.1 million BBB Business Profiles were accessed locally through our website in 2016.

Price

Better Business Bureau and Yelp! are both free services. Like BBB, Home Advisor offers a free online directory for homeowners seeking out trusted service providers.

Range of services

As explained later, BBB has a wider range of services than its competitors.

BBB's dispute resolution service is by far superior in terms of price and effectiveness, as it is free to use. Effectiveness is determined by business responses and resolution rate. Yelp, on the other hand is restricted in this category because it only offers customers reviews and star ratings.

Reliable source for business information

According to a survey administered by Nielsen in 2016, BBB is the most reliable source for business information: 88 percent of consumers said they trust BBB (Figure 2e).

Ratings and customer reviews

BBB ratings represent the public's opinion of how the business is likely to interact with its customers. Ratings are generated using a dynamic formula based on 13 factors. This includes complaint history, business size, time in business, advertising issues, and revenue. Consumer complaints hold the most weight on a company's rating.

HomeAdvisor's ratings are based on a 5-star system. It's worth noting that BBB shares application programming interface (API) data with people who visit HomeAdvisor, making it easy for them to also search BBB Accredited Business profiles. The BBB logo and ratings are displayed on HomeAdvisor's website. Sharing its information is beneficial to HomeAdvisor because they can use BBB's

reliable business data. In turn, this improves the credibility of Better Business Bureau.

- **HomeAdvisor** also verifies consumer reviews and ratings. According to its website, ratings are solely based on the consumer's opinion. Professionals are rated based on quality, customers services and value for money (HomeAdvisor, 2018).
- **Yelp!** uses star ratings based on consumer feedback. Yelp! doesn't verify customer reviews. Consumers can write anything they want about a business without verifying they did business with them.

Verified customer reviews

Both HomeAdvisor and BBB verify customer reviews; Yelp does not. Only verified customers can submit a customer review to BBB. According to a report published by The New York Times, most five-star reviews are fake. Because of that, "people may depend on negative reviews more than positive ones because they see them as more trustworthy" (New York Times, 2018).

Usage by consumers

Yelp is dominant in terms of consumer usage. 72 million people visited Yelp's app in Q3 2016 alone. BBB has some catching up to do in terms of usability, as the organization doesn't provide a functional app to its users. Usability is a significant barrier for BBB when it comes to establishing relevance among young adults.

Source of income

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota is funded by a network of nearly 7,300 Accredited Businesses that agree to the organization's eight standards for trust. The yearly investment BBB Accredited Businesses make help the organization offer most of its services and programs free of charge to the public. Their investment comes with many benefits.

Table 2 Benefits of BBB Accreditation Source: minnesota.app.bbb.org/be-more-visible		
Greater Exposure Get listed in BBB Search, which puts you in front of consumers looking for trusted businesses.	Enhanced Credibility The BBB Accreditation Seal adds additional credibility to every BBB Accredited Business.	Differentiation Set your business apart from competitors.
Business Tools BBB provides several resources and tools that help businesses meet consumer expectations.	BBB Referral Program Consumers will be able to request quotes from BBB Accredited Businesses directly from your Business Profile page.	BBB Business Profile Customize your own website to showcase your products and services.

HomeAdvisor. Service professionals pay advertising fees to participate in HomeAdvisor's network. HomeAdvisor has a similar structure, but strictly focuses on service providers.

BBB has the advantage over HomeAdvisor because it focuses on a wider range of business categories and charges a flat rate based on business revenue.

Screening process for businesses

Better Business Bureau and HomeAdvisor both have a comprehensive screening process, assuring the customer that they're working with a trusted business.

SWOT Analysis

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota has not conducted an in-depth SWOT analysis. As I alluded to earlier, our BBB hasn't had the time or internal resources to navigate the process. BBB needs to identify and address the internal and external factors that pose a threat to its stability in the marketplace. The following analysis is based on internal data and information available to the public.

Strengths: Things Better Business Bureau does well.
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- BBB offers a wider range of free tools and resources to consumers.
- All business information is verified by a BBB staffer (HomeAdvisor does the same with reviews but isn't as thorough). Unlike BBB, Yelp! and Google don't verify customer reviews.
- Internal resources such as skilled, knowledgeable staff and information about companies in our service area. BBB's most valuable asset is its database, which holds verified information on tens of thousands of companies across Minnesota and North Dakota. This information (consumer complaints, verified customer reviews, and BBB Ratings, on a scale from A+ to F) makes it easier for people learn about a business before working with them.
- Most of what BBB accomplishes in Minnesota and North Dakota is through internal resources. The organization is equipped with 38 skilled and knowledgeable staff and board members from a variety of industries who provide valuable external perspective. Unlike BBB's competitors, the

organization invests in more than 100 local offices across the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

- Tangible assets such as intellectual property, capital, and technology
- Stability in the marketplace (100+ years)
- Free educational resources for consumers and businesses.
- Excellent rapport with local media outlets. The organization has monthly segments on Fox 9 and KARE 11. BBB's earned media efforts are the organization's biggest strength in the realm of communications.

Weaknesses: What BBB could improve

Poor web usability

People expect a smooth, convenient consumer journey - digital roads that help solve a problem with as few steps and obstacles as possible.

Resource limitations

The organization employs 38 staffers who cover Minnesota and North Dakota.

Nearly 7,300 BBB Accredited Businesses support and believe in BBB's mission; however, the organization only has three staffers out of the 38 who focus on retaining them. This makes it difficult to educate BBB Accredited Businesses on the true value of their investment. The organization has recently improved its relationship with BBB Accredited Businesses by scheduling face-to-face visits to help them maximize their investment.

Marketing limitations

BBB doesn't have a Marketing Director to properly execute strategic initiatives.

The organization's limited marketing budget may pose a threat to the success of my paid media plan.

Database management

Due to an overwhelming amount of data and staff limitations, we haven't been able to provide in-depth information on all of the companies in our database.

Opportunities

Underserved markets for specific services offered

- Verified customer reviews (Trust is a factor)
- Millennials and Gen Z are underserved markets.
- Capitalize on the services that differentiate us from competitors.

Increase relevance among consumers who rely on apps to seek out business information

Develop a functional app that consumers can use on the go when they're making a purchasing decision or looking for a trusted business. This could narrow the gap between BBB and Yelp! in terms of usage and traffic.

Leverage BBB Scam Tracker to drive local media interest

Contact scam victims who are willing to speak with the media.

Categorical differentiation

Many of the BBB Accredited Businesses that support BBB's mission are contractors. The organization should consider focusing on different industries to create differentiation from HomeAdvisor, which strictly focuses on service providers.

Growth opportunities

Focus on new consumer segments: New adults and homeowners

- Use differential targeting to identify new segments with high growth opportunity
- Combat the misconception that businesses must pay for a satisfactory rating with earned, social, and owned media

Threats

- HomeAdvisor purchased Angie's List in October of 2017. That purchase has made HomeAdvisor stronger because Angie's list is a more recognizable brand than HomeAdvisor.
- Unfavorable media coverage
- Losing relevance: Some people will ask their friends for recommendations or Google a business before going to BBB because they perceive it to be an outdated organization
- The marketplace is constantly evolving. BBB needs to find a way to keep up with an ever-changing marketplace to better serve its current audiences and provide more value to underserved markets such as new adults

Qualitative insights

Content analysis was performed on social media to gauge consumer beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of Better Business Bureau. Data collection informed qualitative insights drawn from Facebook posts and reviews, Twitter, local Google Reviews, and YouTube comment sections.

The goal for my qualitative research is to find out where BBB currently resides in the minds of the public. I discovered a few common themes during my research. To me, one of the most valuable insights found was that some people believe that BBB is the “Yelp! for old people.” This is an important insight because it confirms the widespread belief that BBB is an outdated organization that is no longer relevant, at least in the eyes of some.

Another key insight drawn from social media listening was that BBB has organically established relevance among some new adults. One Twitter user illustrates that point by saying, “I feel like I’m an adult because I look up retail websites that seem sketchy on the Better Business Bureau to see if they are legit.” That’s a powerful insight because tells us that BBB plays a role in the online shopper’s consumer journeys. As I discuss later, that insight is also backed by quantitative consumer data drawn from a 2016 Nielsen survey that indicates BBB is more trusted than its competition when searching for reliable business information.

Quantitative insights: The consumer journey

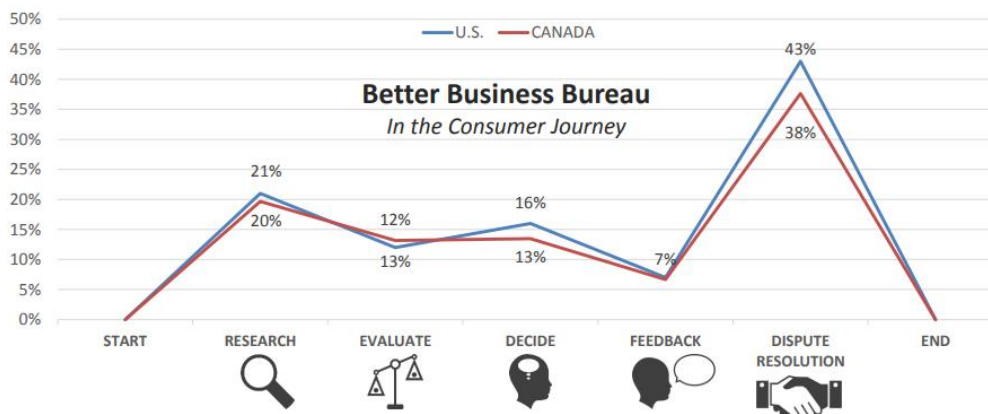
In 2016, Nielsen and Better Business Bureau conducted research to find out where we fit in the consumer journey and gain a better understanding of our current audiences. Our data was collected from 2,083 respondents who are familiar with BBB.

Pertaining to my objective to increase BBB's relevance in the consumer journey, Nielsen data revealed that BBB (87%) is more trusted than Yelp! (67%) for customer reviews (Nielsen, 2016). In terms of consumer usage, respondents indicated that they use BBB to research a business (21%) or use the organization's free dispute resolution services (43%). I will use this data to hone in on specific audiences by employing consumer segmentation.

The chart below represents BBB's current role in the consumer journey, from start to finish. Online survey data revealed that the biggest gap in consumer usage happens during the research phase.

Q11. Which business review organizations/businesses/websites do you usually check in the following steps when making a purchase decision? Base: Respondents use BBB for information, recommendations, ratings or advice about businesses

- ☐ **RESEARCH** products/service providers before using them
- ☐ **EVALUATE** products/service providers for comparison
- ☐ **DECIDE** products/services providers for purchase
- ☐ Share **FEEDBACK** and/or write a customer review after purchase
- ☐ Use for dispute/complaint **RESOLUTION** if something goes wrong after purchase



Planning

Objectives and strategies: Perception

Objective. Change the way people think about Better Business Bureau.

Strategy. Plan and execute a brand awareness campaign to elevate brand knowledge and favorability.

Objective. Demonstrate that BBB is the only trusted source among consumer sites that offers reliable business information.

Goal. Increase the number of new adults who use BBB during their consumer journey by 15 percent.

Strategy. Use mixed media to tap into moments of receptivity.

Vision. Better Business Bureau is the go-to source for information-seeking consumers looking for a reliable business or service provider.

Measurable. Create journey maps using Google Analytics data to determine how many users took meaningful action on BBB's website (Submitted a complaint/review, used Request a Quote, contacted a business from a BBB Profile, etc.).

Objectives and strategies: relevance

Objective. Position BBB as a go-to source for new adults: From the "Yelp! for old people - irrelevant" to an empowering source that streamlines the consumer journey.

Strategy. Develop and execute a paid, earned, shared and owned strategy that addresses the common pain points faced by new adults.

Objective. Increase the percentage of young adults who prefer to use BBB's website to research a business from 21 percent to 40 percent by the end of the fiscal year.

Measurable

Use Google Analytics to determine how many unique users visited BBB Search during the campaign. Collect demographic and behavioral data to retarget new adults. Web usage data from 2017-2018 will be the benchmark for success.

Vision: Consumers and business owners will hold a more favorable attitudes and beliefs about BBB Ratings.

Objectives: Ratings

Objective. Develop a communications plan to increase the number of consumers and business owners who hold a favorable attitude towards BBB Ratings.

Goals

- Brand knowledge: Increase the number of people who are aware of BBB Ratings and narrow the knowledge gap of people who may not know how they work.
- To change the narrative of BBB Ratings - from a "meaningless system" to a trusted source people can depend on before making an informed purchase decision.
- To establish more relevance to consumers for BBB Ratings.

Earned media: ratings

In the event BBB receives unfavorable media attention around the “pay-to-play” rhetoric, we will have a crisis communications plan in place. Talking points will be used to maintain a consistent message when fielding media inquiries.

The information will be hosted on BBB’s website and shared on social media once the page is updated. This information will not be distributed to reporters unless BBB experiences negative press coverage.

Communicating BBB Ratings

Source

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota has two primary sources who communicate information to the public -- one of whom is the Communications Manager and spokesperson. He writes all press releases and articles while also handling most of the organization’s media inquiries. When speaking with the press, the Communications Manager is the most qualified person to deliver any messages regarding ratings and perception because he is the most familiar with the subject matter.

Ideally, the source should possess certain qualities to ensure the message comes across as it was originally intended. The first quality that the source should possess is sharp communication skills. Successful spokespeople are well spoken and able to articulate the intended message with an appropriate tone while projecting confidence. This encourages approachability and enhances overall credibility of the organization.

The Communications Manager at BBB possesses the key attributes of a successful public speaker. He is well-versed in all topics, local and national, related to BBB and trends impacting the marketplace. When a reporter calls about a story, he is able to think quickly and gather talking points in a short timeframe. These are all qualities BBB's Communications Department is currently getting formally trained on, in the event our primary spokesperson is out of the office.

The other source is the Social Media Coordinator. He responds to inquiries on social media quickly and thoroughly using messages consistent with the tone of the Communications Manager. The Social Media Coordinator works with all departments to maintain and accurately echo the voice of BBB online using a message and tone that closely aligns with the spokesperson. While doing so, the Social Media Coordinator adds a human touch to the organization by offering timely, informative and accessible posts. He also acts as a community manager by quickly responding to comments, questions and users' concerns.

Message

In the eyes of some, BBB has lost credibility because of its ratings system. BBB crafted messages to combat the false "pay-to-play" rhetoric and negative attitude some business owners and consumers hold about BBB's rating system.

Talking points: Misconception that BBB is "pay-to-play"

- Our ratings are not for sale.
- Only businesses with a proven track record and ethical business practices are contacted about possible BBB Accreditation. This is an invitation program and businesses are under no obligation to become accredited.

- Companies that express interest are vetted for a history of complaints, previous government actions and proper licensure, if applicable. These companies that become BBB Accredited are then held to an even higher standard, as they pledge to uphold BBB's eight standards for trust.
- All businesses can earn a satisfactory rating, BBB Accredited or not. We have tens of thousands of businesses in our database that hold a satisfactory rating with us (Anything above a C is satisfactory).

Knowledge

The organization's current messages are designed to help consumers and members of the businesses community understand how BBB Ratings work.

- BBB grades are based on file information about the business, most of which is public information or provided to the organization by consumers. In some cases, a business's grade may be lowered if BBB does not have sufficient information about the business despite requests to provide necessary information.
- All ratings are fluid and change based on a dynamic formula.
- Ratings are objective and based on 13 factors.
- Portions of the ratings formula change over time (complaints and government actions "age")
- Full points for "time in business" are received at four years in business.
- BBB determines the size of a business based on its revenue.

Speaking with business owners: talking points

- Complaints and government actions age over time and carry less weight on the rating over time.
- Ratings fluctuate based on business activity in the marketplace.
- Ratings are based on 13 factors on a 100-point scale. Would you like me to send you a link with our public description of the rating system?

Channel

- Email 'About BBB' document to reporters, BBB Accredited Businesses, and consumer newsletter subscribers.
- Share 'About BBB' blog to Facebook and Twitter at the same time the email is sent out.
- Staffers who regularly talk with consumers and prospective BBB Accredited Business on the phone, during on-site visits, and at networking events will commit the 'About BBB' document to memory to ensure messaging consistency.

Shaping perception

Source

The Communications Manager is the most qualified person to translate messages related to the perception of Better Business Bureau, as he is BBB's expert on influencing public opinion. He also plays a role in crafting and delivering consumer-facing messages through earned and owned media. The Social Media Coordinator is the most qualified staffer to handle paid and shared media.

Messages

The perception portion of my communications plan will focus on two messages. The intended recipient for the first message will be people who have a misunderstanding about what BBB truly does or hold an unfavorable attitude about the organization. The second message is curated for college students ages 18-22 and new adults ages 22-34.

1) “The marketplace isn’t going to protect itself.”

This is a powerful message because it tells people what BBB does, the problem the organization solves and gives people a reason to believe the brand promise is delivered.

2) “BBB is an empowering source for new adults.”

The message is framed up this way to guide strategic and creative direction. In my mixed media plan, I outline how BBB can address common pain points new adults experience as they take on new responsibilities. On the creative side, I will use messages such as “Adulting made easy. That’s BBB.” The message will resonate with millennials who strive for independence, but also seek reliable source to rely on when searching for a trusted business.

Channel

The message will be delivered via through paid, social and owned channels. The first message will appear on billboards throughout the Twin Cities and on Facebook. The Facebook ad objective will be awareness. BBB will create a microsite (go.bbb.org/trust) that will tie to the billboard and Facebook ad. The microsite will educate visitors about BBB and provide prove on how its brand promise is delivered.

Implementation

To influence key stakeholders and the public, we must first learn about their characteristics, values, attitudes and behaviors. I revealed some of those attributes by studying brand archetypes, which can be leveraged by companies to chart consumer pathways and uncover the rationale behind their pre-purchase decisions.

I would identify people who use BBB's website as the "Sage" because they are information seekers. "This archetype combines objective analysis with the capacity to weigh many factors and the inclusion of expert opinion while inherently remaining a pragmatic skeptic" (Chen and Hartwell, 2012). BBB serves as an expert by offering free tools and resources that help them make informed purchasing decisions and avoid scams.

Target markets by region

Tier one (70%)	Minneapolis, Fargo/Moorhead, and St. Cloud
Tier two (20%)	Mankato and Rochester
Tier three (10%)	Duluth, Grand Forks, and Bismarck

Desired mindset

- I always check with Better Business Bureau before making a big purchase decision. I trust BBB to help steer me in the right direction.
- BBB is the first place I go when looking for a reliable business/submit and read customer reviews/consumer information.
- "BBB has my back."

Buying style segmentation

I sorted through a plethora of behavioral data to determine consumer segmentation, which is a method for grouping consumers by common characteristics. Data considered includes socio-demographics, stage of life, values, current mindset, pre-existing attitudes, and what motivates them to shop and follow through with a purchase.

Leverage social media insights to inform creative

During my qualitative analysis, I engaged in social media listening to harvest valuable insights from real-time conversations about BBB. I will leverage consumer insights to drive the strategy by finding out “what people are saying, who’s saying it, how often, and in which communities” (Young, 2014).

Table 3 outlines the insights used to develop creative messaging for our target audiences.

Table 3 Market segmentation: homeowners and new adults Data: (BBB/Nielsen, 2016)			
Market segments	Buyers of the best (Head of the household)	Penny pinchers (DIYer)	Swayable shopaholics (The Joneses)
Key considerations	<i>Excellence</i> Quality is more important than low price. They are careful to buy the best and are brand loyalists.	<i>Cost</i> All purchasing decisions are made based on cost (the lower the better)	<i>Ease</i> The key benefit is the emotional payoff they get from the simple act of buying. They go shopping simply because they want to.
Percent of market	14	15	29
Demographics (%)			
Male	54	79	46
Female	46	22	54
Age 18-34	30	39	43
35-54	36	38	36
55+	35	23	22
	<i>Finding the best service provider in town</i>	<i>When a DIY project goes wrong</i>	<i>Finding a home remodeler or landscaper that will</i>

Where BBB fits into the consumer journey	The quality of work from a service provider is more important than the price. They may already “know a guy” or ask a neighbor before they search BBB. They may also use BBB Request a Quote to get free project estimates from local service providers.	Penny Pinchers are will likely search YouTube for “how-to videos” before searching BBB for a reliable contractor to fix their DIY fail. If they do go to BBB, they will use BBB Request a Quote to get the best possible project estimate.	<i>help them outdo their neighbors</i> Swayable Shopoholics will most likely to find their project inspirations on Pinterest or Instagram. They may take a minute to check the service provider’s BBB Rating and complaints/customer reviews.
Pain points	When a project isn’t done right the first time. “Adulting is hard.”	“Wasting” money hiring someone else when they can do the job themselves. “Adulting is hard.”	When they have to put in extra effort to find what they’re looking for online. “Adulting is hard.”
Buying style statements (Via Nielsen)	I often seek advice from others before making a purchase I buy based on quality, not price.	When shopping, my number one goal is to save as much money as possible.	I tend to make impulse purchases. I’m a “spender” rather than a “saver”
Motto	“Let’s get it right the first time.”	“Duct tape fixes everything”	“I’m the Joneses neighbors are trying to keep up with.” “Always living my best life.”
Preferred social media sites	<i>Facebook</i> Asks friends and family for recommendations	<i>Facebook</i> Asks friends and family for recommendations	<i>Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook</i> Project inspiration #ForTheGram

Moments of receptivity

Buyers of the best: “What’s the best (service provider) in (city)? Looking for recommendations!” Buyers of the best use Facebook to ask friends and family for recommendations.

Penny pinchers.

- “Do I know anyone who knows how to fix _____?”
- “Does anyone know where to find an affordable (service provider/business) in (city). Looking for recommendations!” Penny pinchers won’t seek out recommendations for service providers until they run out of options.

Swayable shopaholics have the largest expendable income and aren’t afraid to spend top dollar. They are also detail-oriented information seekers who spend more time searching for the “best of the best” products when making a purchase decision. A survey conducted by Home Depot found that 53 percent of Americans 25 and older have tried to one-up their neighbors with a home improvement project. Since more than half of millennial homeowners are competitive in the realm of remodeling projects, this mindset will be considered for future media opportunities (Home Depot, 2018).

Paid, Earned, Shared, Owned (PESO)

Paid media

Any time a brand pays to leverage a third-party channel
(Small Business Trends, 2017)

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota has a \$***** marketing budget to work with in 2018-2019. Consumer-driven campaigns typically focus on billboards - vinyl and digital, 15-30 second spots on local radio stations, digital ads and social media.

Paid media will play little to no role when communicating BBB Ratings. To demonstrate to people that BBB Ratings aren't "pay-to-play," the communications strategy will focus on earned, shared, and owned media.

Facebook

Awareness: Connect with people who have likely been exposed to our "The marketplace isn't going to protect itself" billboards or recently visited our website by creating an awareness ad on Facebook. The ad will use similar creative and the call to action will be "Learn More."

YouTube

Use six-second YouTube ads to capitalize on moments of receptivity.

For instance, when people search for "How to" videos for DIY projects on YouTube, they will be served a six-second video ad directing them to BBB Search. We could also leverage YouTube ads to re-introduce our website through user experience. In other words, walking the viewer through our free consumer resources.

Radio

- Objective: Shape perception of BBB with high repetition

- Placement: Local radio stations, Spotify, and during ‘Stuff You Should Know’ podcast when topics relate to “adulting.”
- Messaging
 - The marketplace isn’t going to protect itself.
 - For penny pincher homeowners: “Not all projects are meant for DIY. Find a reliable service provider at bbb.org.”
 - For new adults: “Adulting made easy. That’s BBB.”

Billboard

Objective: Enhance brand knowledge of BBB with high exposure and frequency

Search

Objective: Increase traffic to BBB Business Profiles by 25 percent

- Pay-per-click campaign that focuses on top-searched business categories through bbb.org.
- Measurables
 - Click-through rates will be monitored to determine if our ads are relevant to new adults searching for a reliable service provider, advice on “adulting” or DIY tips.
 - Track referral traffic from BBB Search and our Adulting microsite. We want to find out how many users accessed BBB Business Profiles.
- Limitation: BBB doesn’t have a staffer with paid search experience or a streamlined analytics dashboard to track digital campaigns.

Earned media

When your brand is shared via word of mouth (Small Business Trends, 2017)

Earned media is one of Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota's most valuable strong suits. BBB has a limited marketing budget to promote its services to the public, making earned media a pivotal component to its communications strategy.

The Communications Manager works closely with local media outlets to provide valuable consumer-facing content and warns the public about scams currently targeting our region. The need for consumer-related content is growing and our BBB has established itself as a go-to source for local reporters. For example, the organization does monthly consumer-focused segments with local outlets such as KMSP and KARE 11.

Earned media yields significant benefits for the organization. Last year, we earned more than 6,600 media mentions across Minnesota and North Dakota. The most valuable benefit relevant to the goal of my capstone is the opportunity to heighten credibility. This is BBB's chance to show off its expertise in the realm of consumer education and scam prevention. In turn, this has the potential to also boost BBB's favorability.

Consumer topics geared toward college students and homeowners will be pitched to media outlets to create connectivity with social and digital efforts. Developing and launching a microsite for new adults will be a key touchpoint. Topics will cover financial literacy, making large purchasing decisions, job hunting, preventing identity theft, and scam prevention. This may draw interest

from consumer reporters because it's a unique experience that hasn't been widely covered in the Twin Cities. I would recommend amplifying earned media coverage through a low budget boosted post since that tactic has worked for us in the past.

At the start of the awareness campaign, we could issue our 'About BBB' document to reporters and key stakeholders. The document highlights what BBB does and does not do and the services we provide to consumers and businesses. Consumer reporters will also receive a press kit using messages and creative consistent with the campaign.

Tactic

- Distribute "About BBB" document to new reporters and contacts we have a strong relationship with. This purpose of this document is to describe who we are and what we do and highlight the services we offer consumers and the business community.

Shared media

Content specifically designed for user generated circulation

(Shift Communications, 2017)

Create a more favorable perception of Better Business Bureau and expand brand awareness

- Messaging and creative will mirror all facets of the awareness campaign
- Quickly respond to people who write on our page and politely correct people who attempt to spread inaccurate information.
- Use social media listening to stay current with marketplace trends and harvest insights from important conversations surrounding Better Business Bureau to understand and meet consumer needs.

Owned media

Channels you create and control (Small Business Trends, 2017)

My owned media strategy aims to create more relevance among our key stakeholders and new adults. Unlike competitors like HomeAdvisor and Yelp!, Better Business Bureau operates with a mission-focused purpose. According to Edelman's Trust Barometer, trust in businesses and institutions is falling at a fast pace. "Purpose driven businesses need to involve millennials in the process by demonstrating how their business addresses the problem, why it matters and what they can do about it" ([Edelman, 2017](#)). Based on that insight, it will be important for BBB to develop valuable content to address common pain points new adults experience throughout their consumer journey.

BBB's website is our most valuable asset. Our website is a valuable tool because it holds all the organization's resources and tools for consumers and businesses. In general, bbb.org helps consumers find reliable business

information. These are information-seekers who look for company ratings, complaints, customer reviews, local scams, and other free resources that help them make informed purchasing decisions.

We create educational content including articles, press releases, blog posts, consumer tip sheets, e-newsletters, and videos. This information is published on BBB's owned channels including our local website, blog, and email distribution lists. We have internal guidelines in place to ensure we're creating relevant content for the right people at the right time.

Our content strategy and content marketing is managed in-house. The process involves our IT Coordinator, Communications Manager, Events Coordinator, and Social Media Coordinator. Our local website is managed by our IT Coordinator. The Communications Manager develops timely topics and writes our press releases, articles, blogs, and oversees the editorial calendar. The Social Media Coordinator will promote campaign-related content on Facebook and Twitter.

Governance is a significant limitation to the success our current owned media strategy as our umbrella organization, Council of Better Business Bureaus, now limits the content we publish on our local website. Our BBB creates valuable consumer-focused content, but the information isn't discoverable because of those restrictions. My owned media strategy proposes to house our local content on a blog site that offers more control. The blog will also work in conjunction with my paid, earned and shared strategy.

Solution. My owned media strategy proposes to house our local content on a blog site that offers more control while linking back to the national website. The blog will work in conjunction with my paid, earned and shared strategy.

‘Level Up Adulting’

Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota has an opportunity to provide more value to new adults. BBB owns a wide range of content that could help solve the common pain points new adults face as they take on the new commitments and responsibilities that come with growing up. Most of our efforts will focus on the microsite, which offer advice on the topics listed below. In general, topics for new adults will focus on financial literacy, large purchasing decisions, and scam prevention.

Topics for new adults

College students

- February: BBB Tips on Consolidating Student loans
- Late February: Spring break travel tips
- September: Tips for College Students to Avoid ID Theft
- April, August: Phony job offers that target college students
- May: Bogus student loan forgiveness offers
- May: BBB advice for finding apartments, rental properties

EVALUATION

Like many non-profits, we have limited resources to accomplish our mission. Throughout my communications plan, it's essential to demonstrate how campaign success will be evaluated. The purpose of this section is to explain how I will measure strategic objectives.

Objective. Increase the percentage of consumers who use BBB's website to research a business from 21 percent to 40 percent by the end of the fiscal year.

Measurables.

- Use Google Analytics to determine how many unique users visited BBB Profiles throughout the campaign.
- Create measurable journey maps using Google Analytics data to track how many users took a meaningful action on BBB's website or microsite (Submitted a complaint/review, used Request a Quote, accessed a BBB Business Profile, etc.).

Objective. Increase the percentage of consumers who turn to BBB for dispute resolution from 43 percent to 55 percent by the end of the fiscal year.

Measurable. We will determine success based on how many people file a complaint about a business. To measure usability, we will use Google Analytics to analyze the six-step conversion path from BBB's "File a Complaint" page to completed submission page.

Objective. Change the way people think about Better Business Bureau

Measurables

- Success will be measured based on the results from the online survey.

- Invest in Meltwater to measure user consumer sentiment before, during, and after the campaign is complete. Social media listening will be used to monitor real-time conversations about BBB.
- Recall: “The consumer’s ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue” (Keller, 2013). Survey responses will tell us how many respondents can recognize the blue flame before and after the campaign.

Measuring brand resonance (Keller, p. 95-96)

Before launching my communications plan, and following implementation, I would recommend measuring the perception of new adults beyond the scope of social media listening. While useful, social media listening only scratches the surface of where Better Business Bureau resides in the mind of consumers.

One method that could be used to measure BBB’s true brand resonance, the “extent to which consumers feel they are ‘in sync’ with the brand,” is to develop and deliver an online survey to new adults familiar with BBB using the six building blocks of branding as prompts (Keller, 94-96). The first online survey will set a baseline for how BBB is currently perceived. This feedback could be used to inform mixed media decisions before launching the campaign.

BBB will send an online survey after the campaign to determine if the communications plan was able to shape more favorable perceptions and increase relevance among new adults.

Objective. Increase the number of new adults who hold a more favorable perception of Better Business Bureau by 20 percent.

Measurable. Perception and brand resonance will be measured based on responses received from the post-campaign survey.

Table 4 Survey questions Brand Building Elements (Keller, P. 94-96)		
Salience Label the brands you recognize below. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "Better Business Bureau (BBB)"?	Performance On a scale from 1-5, how reliable is BBB when looking for a business or service provider? Compared to other research websites, how would you rate the usability of bbb.org? What issues, if any, have deterred you from using our tools and resources?	Imagery On a scale from 1-5, five being the most accurate and one being the least, how well do the following words describe BBB?: Honest, trustworthy, ethical, credible, reliable, responsive, non-profit, government agency In the past month, have you seen our logo displayed on a company car, a storefront window or website?
Judgments Quality What is your overall opinion of Better Business Bureau? Consideration On a scale from 1-5, five being very relevant and one being not relevant at all, how relevant is BBB to you? What, if anything, could BBB do to become more relevant to your needs?	Feelings Does BBB give you a sense of security when you're searching for a trusted business or making a purchasing decision? On a scale from 1-5, five being very favorable and one being not favorable at all, how do you feel about BBB?	Resonance On a scale from 1-5, indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. Loyalty I use BBB to research and find reliable businesses to work with. Attachment I really love this brand. Community This brand is used by people like me.

		<p>Engagement On a scale from 1-5, indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.</p> <p>I like to tell people about my experience with businesses I found through BBB's website.</p> <p>I frequently visit BBB's website and check its Facebook page for updates.</p>
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Social media

- Urchin Tracking Modules (UTM) will be used to translate campaign value to the CEO, determine where web traffic is coming from, and test messages and creative. We will use UTM parameters to identify traffic referrals to our 'Level Up Adulting' microsite.

Web traffic

In 2016, Council of Better Business Bureaus overhauled its website and all local BBB websites to prioritize SEO and user experience. Since the transition to a new website and database, local web traffic has plummeted. In 2016, 4.1 million BBB Business Profiles were accessed locally. While this number is has not confirmed to be accurate, preliminary numbers show that only 762,000 people accessed BBB Business Profiles in 2017. Assuming that number is accurate, BBB's paid media strategy will be a priority.

Objective. Increase traffic to our local website by 25 percent

Measurables

- Click-through rates will be monitored to determine if our ads are relevant to new adults searching for a reliable service provider, advice on “adulting” or DIY tips.
- Campaign traffic will be monitored to determine the number of users who visited the ‘Level Up Adulting’ microsite from an ad campaign.

Earned media

One of the most important measurables to evaluate for earned media are the mentions of BBB outside of our owned channels, particularly prominent media exposure. We will continue to use Burrelles Luce, a media monitoring service to analyze the impact of our public and media relations efforts.

Key performance indicators

- Relevance, earned media value, prominence, tone, and if a story was shared on media outlet’s social media channels.
- Earned media value
- Circulation, number of viewers
- Number of people who were engaged with the message whether they heard it on the radio or watched it on TV.
- How much time was devoted to BBB in each segment

Shared: Social media

Increase brand exposure to information-seekers and new adults

- Metrics: Reach, impression, view
- Measurable: Cost per impression

Increase traffic to local website and campaign microsite

- Metrics: page views, unique visitors, length of visits
- Measurable: Cost per click

Change the way people think and talk about BBB

Social media conversations and sentiment score will be closely monitored to

gauge brand perception. Facebook's analytics platform will be used track ad

relevancy score. Relevancy score is calculated based on projected positive and

negative feedback from intended target audiences. The higher an ad's relevancy

score is (on a scale from 1-10), the less it will cost (Facebook, 2015).

Future recommendations

- Before presenting this plan to the management team and Board of Directors, I will have to create a timeline, budget and determine which staffers will be involved. Given the scope of my plan, BBB may have to allocate marketing dollars to hire a third-party agency.
- To achieve higher relevance, Better Business Bureau should take a step back and focus on brand awareness. People are familiar with BBB, but more than half of consumers aren't sure what we do (Nielsen, 2016). I would recommend that we conduct focus groups with people who haven't heard of BBB or aren't exactly sure what we do. Focus group candidates will be identified while sorting through the pre-campaign survey responses.
- BBB should focus more on new media to reach younger audiences. Before we engage with new adults, BBB should first conduct more research to uncover where the organization fits into their consumer journey.
- Identify more opportunities for BBB to engage with and provide more brand experiences to consumers. Creating a microsite and interactive events for new adults will be a starting point. More research on the "adulthood" trend should be conducted before pitching the 'Level Up Adulthood' concept.
- BBB's claim to fame is being the pioneer of marketplace trust. One of my communications professors pointed out that BBB has an opportunity to

leverage its heritage and back up its mission to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust. He recommended using “trust never gets old” to frame up a messaging strategy that embraces our history. We would first need to define what trust is and demonstrate to our target audiences how BBB delivers on its brand promise.

Appendix

Figure 1a. Overview of BBB Ratings: bbb.org/truth



Figure 1b. Blog following 20/20 ABC News [report](#)

Last week, the entire Better Business Bureau system was the subject of a *20/20* ABC News Report. As you might expect, the portrait it painted of the BBB was not flattering. While we cannot escape the fact the story was hard-hitting (as stories of this nature always are) or the fact the reporter unearthed some flaws and inconsistencies, we also must be careful not to sell ourselves – or the work we do – short. We have a strong tradition, one that dates back almost 100 years, of providing the public with reliable and impartial business news and information. We have also assisted countless people throughout the years, protecting them from fraud and scams and encouraging them to do business with reliable firms, saving them billions of dollars in the process. This tradition of service will continue.

Nevertheless, for all of us at the BBB of Minnesota and North Dakota, the *20/20* report was difficult to watch (just as it undoubtedly was for BBB employees across the country). Our employees are dedicated and we all believe deeply in our mission: the maintenance of a marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other. So to see documented instances of BBB employees and the BBB system itself falling short was especially disappointing. Nevertheless, we're convinced these are isolated incidents and/or flaws in our system which can – and will – be corrected. This will be our top priority.

Though we wish *20/20* had discovered the Better Business Bureau was perfect, that's not realistic. Very few, if any, organizations of our size can withstand the kind of close examination a news program like this brings to the fore without some faults being revealed. But as a non-profit organization that prides itself on transparency and seeks to model ethical behavior, we especially must welcome this kind of scrutiny. And if that scrutiny reveals flaws – as it has – we must learn from it. Trust is paramount in our line of work.

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Trust is also our single most important asset; our employees must trust that they're working for an organization still dedicated to the promotion of the highest ethical relationship between businesses and the public, and consumers and businesses must trust that we're providing them with reliable information and ratings which accurately reflect the record of each company we report on. For us to do anything counter to these things or to do anything which would cause our staff and the public to lose faith in us would be hugely detrimental to our well-being as an organization. It is entirely in our interest to hold ourselves to the very highest ethical standards. Our survival has always depended upon that – and always will.

Ultimately, we are looking at the *20/20* report as a learning opportunity. We will address and correct the shortcomings it highlighted. We will also review any and all concerns which have been raised in regard to our processes and procedures. If there are things we need to be doing better, you can trust that we *will* do them better. Above all, we want you to know that we are still worthy of your trust. If in any way, that trust has been shaken, we ask that you give us the chance to earn it back. We are your Better Business Bureau, and we have been since 1912.

Nielsen data

Figure 2a.

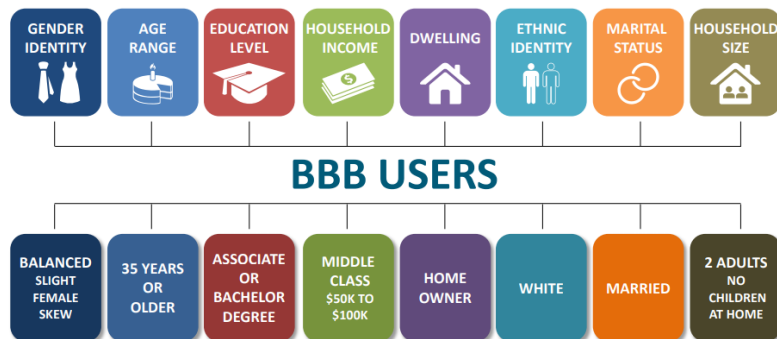


Figure 2b.

BBB + Buying Styles Nielsen GfK MRI Segments

Nielsen selected 17 statements from the dozens of benchmarks used to group consumers by Buying Styles and presented them to BBB survey respondents.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. I like to SHOP AROUND before making a purchase.</p> <p>2. I use the INTERNET to buy HARD-TO-FIND PRODUCTS.</p> <p>3. I like to COMPARE PRICES across different sites before purchasing something online.</p> <p>4. Before purchasing a product online, I typically read ONLINE REVIEWS submitted by others.</p> <p>5. If a product is made by a COMPANY I TRUST, I'll buy it even if it is slightly MORE EXPENSIVE.</p> <p>6. I DON'T make purchase decisions BASED ON ADVERTISING.</p> <p>7. My number one goal when shopping is to SAVE AS MUCH MONEY as possible.</p> <p>8. I buy based on QUALITY, NOT PRICE.</p> <p>9. I often seek the ADVICE OF OTHERS before making a purchase.</p> | <p>10. I like to SHARE MY OPINIONS about products and services by posting reviews and ratings online.</p> <p>11. People often COME TO ME FOR ADVICE before making a purchase.</p> <p>12. Brand name is the best INDICATION OF QUALITY.</p> <p>13. I'm always one of the FIRST OF MY FRIENDS to try new products or services.</p> <p>14. I tend to make IMPULSE PURCHASES.</p> <p>15. I'm a "SPENDER" rather than a "SAVER".</p> <p>16. I prefer to buy things my FRIENDS OR NEIGHBORS would APPROVE OF.</p> <p>17. I like to CONNECT WITH BRANDS through social-networking sites.</p> |
|---|---|

Figure 2c.

Buying Style Statement Results

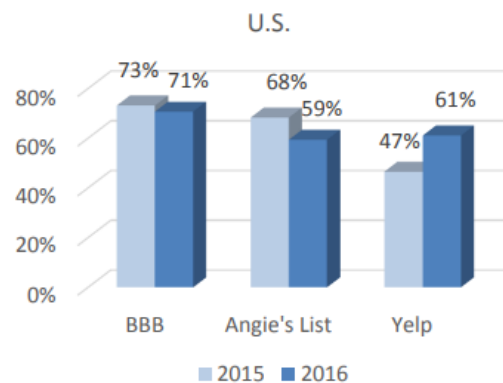
Nielsen GfK MRI Segments

Familiar with BBB	Penny-Pinchers	Conscientious Consumers	Buyers of The Best	Habitualized Havers	Swayable Shopaholics	NIelsen GfK MRI – BUYING STYLE STATEMENT
91%	79%	84%	85%	70%	68%	I like to shop around before making a purchase.
89%	74%	50%	84%	48%	63%	I use the Internet to buy hard-to-find products.
88%	74%	59%	85%	54%	64%	I like to compare prices across different sites before purchasing something online.
84%	70%	58%	83%	50%	61%	Before purchasing a product online, I typically read online reviews submitted by others.
80%	83%	79%	90%	62%	65%	If a product is made by a company I trust, I'll buy it even if it is slightly more expensive.
75%	60%	69%	73%	60%	59%	I don't make purchase decisions based on advertising.
75%	69%	86%	76%	83%	68%	My number one goal when shopping is to save as much money as possible.
70%	75%	72%	87%	51%	60%	I buy based on quality, not price.
50%	36%	39%	52%	29%	54%	I often seek the advice of others before making a purchase.
44%	19%	16%	36%	13%	49%	I like to share my opinions about products and services by posting reviews and ratings online.
44%	32%	20%	49%	15%	51%	People often come to me for advice before making a purchase.
36%	27%	31%	40%	26%	51%	Brand name is the best indication of quality.
32%	24%	13%	38%	11%	55%	I'm always one of the first of my friends to try new products or services.
30%	40%	25%	33%	40%	52%	I tend to make impulse purchases.
30%	42%	24%	36%	39%	52%	I'm a "spender" rather than a "saver".
26%	16%	13%	29%	14%	47%	I prefer to buy things my friends or neighbors would approve of.
25%	11%	8%	26%	8%	44%	I like to connect with brands through social-networking sites.

Figure 2d.

Brand Aided Awareness

Q8: Which, if any, of the following organizations/ businesses are you familiar with? Base: All Respondents



U.S. 2016 RANKER

1.	Amazon	89%
2.	Google Search	86%
3.	Facebook	84%
4.	Better Business Bureau	71%
5.	Yellow Pages	70%
6.	Consumer Reports	65%
7.	Yelp	61%
8.	Angie's List	59%
9.	J.D. Power	46%
10.	Home Advisor	26%

Figure 2e.

How Valued Is BBB

Q14. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and 5 meaning **STRONGLY AGREE**, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the statements below. Base: Familiar with Each Source Answer: 3, 4 or 5 out of a possible 5

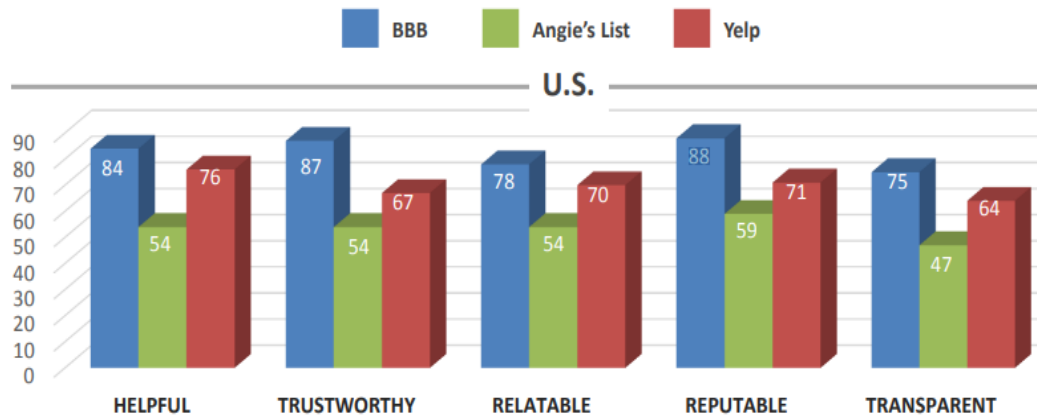


Figure 2f.

Q11. Which business review organizations/businesses/websites do you usually check in the following steps when making a purchase decision? Base: Respondents use BBB for information, recommendations, ratings or advice about businesses

- ☐ **RESEARCH** products/service providers before using them
- ☐ **EVALUATE** products/service providers for comparison
- ☐ **DECIDE** products/services providers for purchase
- ☐ Share **FEEDBACK** and/or write a customer review after purchase
- ☐ Use for dispute/complaint **RESOLUTION** if something goes wrong after purchase

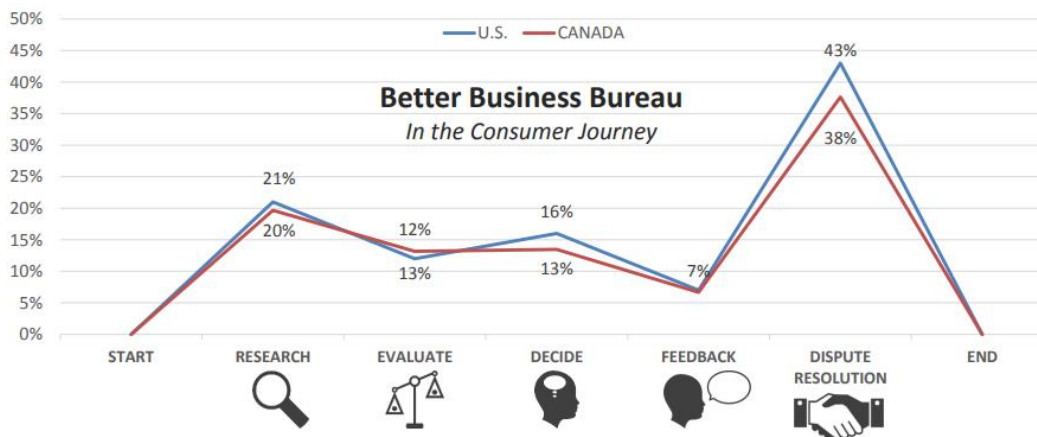
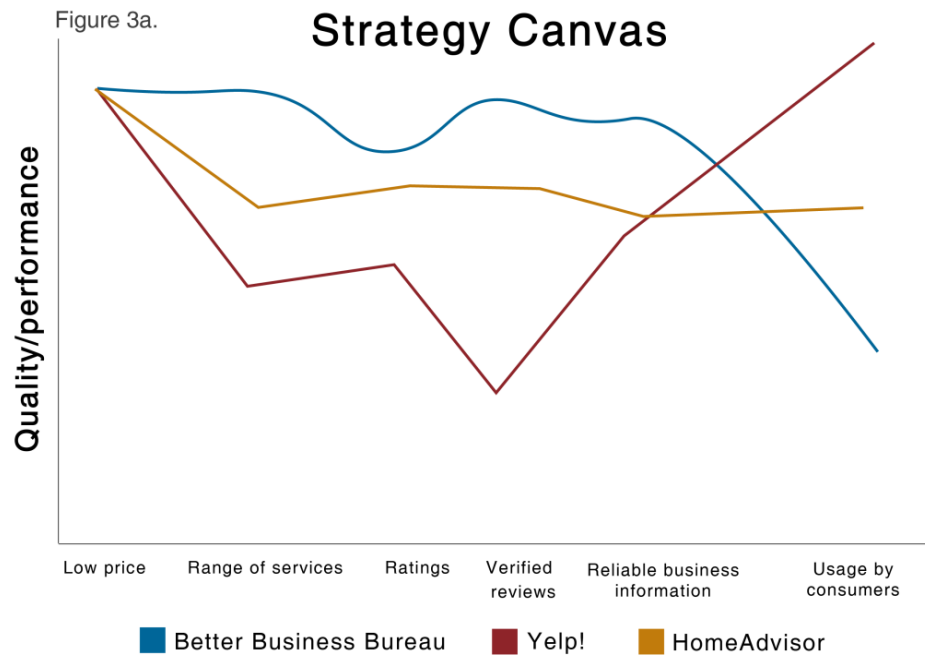


Figure 3a. Strategy Canvas



Social media listening





Dave @dave_esq · May 9

My favorite threat is "I'M GOING TO CALL THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU!".

Listen here, baby boomer. The BBB is **Yelp for old people**. It has literally no power.



1



3



48



Facebook



Goodgoth

3 hrs · 🌐

Like Page

Do you look up a company on the Better Business Bureau before you order from them?

29

23 Comments



Andy Misiura shared a photo.

March 6, 2017 · 🌐

I'm curious, when you see company vehicles do you notice these stickers and does it build credibility in your opinion?



Kahuna Window Cleaning ✓

March 6, 2017 · Hugo · 🌐

Like Page

We are proud to be members of the Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota and TRUST VETS for the last 3 years. If you would like to learn more about either of these great organizations, check out the links in the comments. Have a great week!

10 Reactions 50 Comments



Ben Estrem I would hold them to a higher standard and better work ethic than someone who didn't have one or more of those stickers

Like · Reply · 1y

2



Kevin Olson No. It's just a sticker. Just because you belong to the BBB or have one of their stickers does not mean you are good at what you do.

Like · Reply · 1y


1



PJ Fanberg Do you want my real opinion? I think the BBB is akin to extortionists.


Like · Reply · 1y

1




Nicole Oberg-Peters I think it can make or break some people decision on what company that will go with if that are deciding between 2 different companies.

Like · Reply · 1y




Andy Misiura Exactly. It adds perceived value.

Like · Reply · 1y



Chris Watkins I notice the BBB ones...

Like · Reply · 1y



Ahmir Young
February 13 at 4:04pm · 🌐

I am one of the greatest of all times at contacting the Better Business Bureau when I have issues with companies! No I don't run to social media and bash them, and no I don't call my friends to complain. I contact the Better Business Bureau, and in turn the corporate department of that company contacts me, I tell them my issue, and 99% of the time it ends up in an apology and a credit to my account.


Customer service has no color or gender, so instead of running to social media because you had one bad instance out of 379, try contacting some people that can actually resolve your issue.

PS. My cellphone carrier just gave me a \$200 credit.

👍❤️👍 75

5 Comments · 3 Shares

Ratings



Valor Training Center is at 📍 VALOR Training Center Midtown.

Yesterday at 10:52am · Stockton · 🌐

A+ Rating
by the
Better Business Bureau!

You can't just "buy" a rating from the BBB! Only businesses with the highest moral and ethical business practices and standards are awarded this achievement!!!

VALOR Training Center is THE ONLY Muay Thai Academy in the ENTIRE VALLEY to have earn this prestigious recognition, THE ONLY Martial Arts school in Stockton to get to this status and THE ONLY World Class MuayThai Academy in our area! PERIOD!

Simply no comparison...

Come in and see why! Train with VALOR Now!

(209) 451-0485
Stoxktonmartialarts.com

👍 Like Page

Twitter



Steve Mason @VeniceMase · Jan 8

I paid \$495 for a pair of Zo2's in June. I still haven't received them.

Better Business Bureau is dead-on with the F-rating for BBB.



Yahoo Sports NBA @YahooSportsNBA

"I believe that they are running nothing but a scam."

LaVar Ball's Big Baller Brand received an "F" rating from the Better Business Bureau. 🤔...

408 1.4K 3.5K



Joy Hawkins @JoyanneHawkins · Feb 27

Hey @JohnMu if a large review site is combining their own proprietary rating with customer ratings to come up with the average they use in aggregate review rating schema is this allowed? cc: @methode @jenstar @glenngabe @Marie_Haynes

8 5 17



John ☆.o(≥▽≤)o.☆

@JohnMu

Follow

Replying to @JoyanneHawkins @methode and 3 others

IMO (even outside of the guidelines) creating a mix of different review types isn't an aggregation, it's essentially an artificial rating created through your rules. "I have 5 watermelons and 3 grapes, on average it's 4 fruits" ... technically correct, but not useful.

2:45 PM - 27 Feb 2018

6 Retweets 14 Likes



3 6 14



Tweet your reply



Joy Hawkins @JoyanneHawkins · Feb 27

Replying to @JohnMu @methode and 3 others

Yep. Just to clarify, the site I'm referring to takes User Ratings (1/3) + Their Own Score (2/3) = Average Rating. So the user ratings can suck but if their own score is great, the average is great. Their score is based on "their opinion" due to specific facts they know.

3

Insight: Going to BBB is the adult thing to do. #Adulting



Roxana Peraza @Rocks_Cee · Mar 9

I just filed my first complaint ever to the **Better Business Bureau**. Friday nights are thrilling when you're an **adult**

1 6

Show this thread

LIZ @elizas413 · Mar 20

Just filed a complaint with the **BBB** over \$50. **Adulting** in its rawest form! 😂 But seriously I want my money back tho. 🙄

1

Matt Pello @Pello6 · Mar 15

I filed my first ever complaint with the **BBB**. Is this **adulting**??

2 5

Roxana Peraza @Rocks_Cee · Mar 9

Also I suddenly feel the urge to get a haircut, buy a minivan, and a pair of jorts



1 12



bev @seanabraaa · 3 Nov 2017

I'm reporting StubHub to the **Better Business Bureau** so now I'm an **adult**

2 6



Ethan @CrazyBigEthan · 27 Oct 2017

Replying to @FalcoholicMatt

I just file a complaint with the **better business bureau** like an **adult**

1 5



Alex Otey @OteyCa · 1 Jun 2017

I feel as if I am an **adult** now because I look up retail websites that seem sketchy on the **Better Business Bureau** to see if they are legit.

2 1 7

Megan Griffiths @meggiedoodah · 26 Apr 2016

I signed up for wifi for my apartment & filed a complaint with the **BBB** (unrelated to the wifi), so I'm **adulting** pretty hard today.

PrhymeTime @Melawinnin · 26 Jul 2016

registering my business with **BBB**.....I'm **adulting** yall



1



Josh Baldwin @War_and_Tweets · 2 Jun 2016

Use this
bbb.org



2



Vegeta's Torn Rotator Cuff @GetBizzyChrissy · 2 Jun 2016
for?



1



Josh Baldwin
@War_and_Tweets

Follow

Replying to @GetBizzyChrissy

I'm not going to explain what it is, be an adult and google Better Business Bureau

1:35 PM - 2 Jun 2016



1



Tweet your reply



Vegeta's Torn Rotator Cuff @GetBizzyChrissy · 2 Jun 2016

Replying to @War_and_Tweets

I know what they do, man lol the link to that search engine just threw me off



- 

uncle fester @kingdad2024 · 9 Sep 2015

I'm not sure if it's an **adult** or childish thing to do to report someone to the **Better Business Bureau**, but. I did. So w/e.

1 3
- 

Cuzz Lightyear @SuckMyDimplesHO · 18 Aug 2015

You Know You're An **Adult** When You Threaten Companies With The **Better Business Bureau** & Actually Follow Through.

1
- 

Rachel! @raachel018 · 15 Aug 2015

I am a real **adult** now because I just filled a complaint against a company on the **Better Business Bureau's** website.... 🙄

4
- 

Heather Api @Heatherinaa · 28 Apr 2015

Officially a certified **adult**. Filed a complaint w/the **better business bureau**! Thanks @neonandmore for pissing me off! 😂🙄

1
- 

amanda haeux @archetypeface · 12 Jul 2017

You know you're an **adult** when the **Better Business Bureau** is your friend
- 

Maddi @MaddisonElaine · 7 Aug 2014

just filed a complaint with the **Better Business Bureau**, i think i'm an **adult** now?

1 4
- 

IndicaDreams @IndicaDreamss · 5 Mar 2015

Dealing with the **better business bureau** makes me feel like a **grown up** 🍷

1

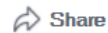
BBB MN Facebook page



Ed Haider reviewed **Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota** — 1★

November 6, 2017 · 🌐

BBB at one time was a powerful entity that would work to resolve consumer issues with businesses. Now they are a marketing tool for business-after all it is business that provides the funding for them by paying to be rated. I had a minor complaint regarding a business today, filed the complaint with BBB, the claim it is because it is not under their purview because the service was performed, just not to the level of expectation. As an example, just because the food is inedible, it was served, so the service was performed. BBB is worthless as a consumer protection organization.



James Thao reviewed **Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota** — 1★

July 23, 2017 · 🌐

Will not use BBB's for any business reason again especially their arbitration even thought its free of charge. Will also not recommend anyone to use it. Their arbitrator is inexperience and can't explain their own decision how they came out about, with no document to back up their decision. In my case I think of more have to do with race factor.



John Jordan ▶ **Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota**

September 14, 2017 · 🌐

I've lost faith in the ratings of this BBB given how they've dealt with a local home builder. The builder is awful, new home and won't fix my cracked and pitted driveway (despite admitting in email it's a warranty issue). Like a couple other homeowners in my neighborhood, we've filed BBB complaints with no resolution. Despite clear evidence the builder isn't interested in living up to his contract the BBB continues, and defends, them holding an A+ rating. I don't what it takes to get the BBB to actually change a rating but three customers of this company having similar problems, people who don't know each other, without resolution has to mean something. To the BBB, sadly, it seems to mean business as usual. My email to them got a non-response response that they marked as "solved" when, in fact, it just left me hanging. What's the point of the BBB if they're just going to let a business continue down the path of taking customers money without living up to their word? Isn't that the reason the BBB exists?



Dianne Nelson ▶ **Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota**

January 6, 2017 · Lake Havasu City, AZ · 🌐

I would like to lodge a complaint against The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota, and recommend an F rating!

I have 2 My Pillow pillows, and travel with them everywhere. I live in ND, and currently my husband and I are in AZ, along with My Pillow! Everyone has different taste, and I personally love them. I paid almost \$100 each for them at different times... 2 for 1 is definitely a bargain, and at times you can get a travel pillow or two for free. You tell me what is different about this sale than most! I am a 66 year old retiree, and have been involved in all levels of retail! Shame on you! Now they are forced to raise their prices!



Pat Sabin ▶ Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota

January 5, 2017 · 🌐

The ad is still on TV! MY PILLOW ROCKS!
The BBB sucks.



Scott Hansen ▶ Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota ***

January 5, 2017 · 🌐

While the BBB may protest that they are not a political association, they sure in the hell went after My Pillow because their founder is a Republican and had the temerity to speak at a Trump rally. Someone in your organization is politically driven and has went after Mike L.

I am now starting my own boycott of the BBB. Ask the FBI how easy it is to lose credibility.



Jean Wang ▶ Better Business Bureau of Minnesota & North Dakota ***

May 20, 2016 · 🌐

I would like to thank you BBB for their service! I had a had time getting one of the store to respond to my request for refund and after calling several times and getting the go around by their one service department to another I finally lodged my complaint on BBB and within one day the business contacted me and the issue was resolved!

Google reviews on BBB of MN & ND



S L
5 reviews

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 3 weeks ago

Unethical for profit company. They sell subscriptions and if a company buys one the BBB will give them a high rating even if their only solution to complaints is denial, denial, denial. However, they're quick to demonize and lower ratings of companies that don't buy a subscription from them so they have an incentive to pay the BBB....the BBB rating for the BBB should be an F



2



Jen Payette
2 reviews

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 2 months ago

The premise of the BBB is to sell the businesses a fee based subscription

If the business does not pay the fee

A business can have zero negative feedback

Yet in google search the BBB says this business is NOT a BBB accredited business

Implying somehow the business is somehow less than de


Preferred Limousine MN

Local Guide · 77 reviews · 45 photos

★★★★★ 3 months ago

Great organization!



Like


Bob Dittel

Local Guide · 117 reviews · 11 photos

★★★★★ 8 months ago

They have your back



Like


Farmington Flyer

10 reviews

★★☆☆☆ 11 months ago

We didn't have much luck with a builder we hired.. A+ rated accredited member yea right..

Then when we had problems the MN BBB was not much help at all with helping us with this business.. Clearly the business is not in compliance with the requirements of a accredited business.. Still A+ rated..

I feel sorry for the next customer to get screwed over by this same business...

IMO the BBB A + Ratings are just for sale.. I would rely on Google , Yelp or other reveiw sites for far more accurate information regarding a business your thinking about using...



2


Jonathan Dagle

Local Guide · 83 reviews · 19 photos

★★★★★ a year ago -

This BBB is great. They've helped me resolve many problems with businesses that can't be troubled to respond directly. BBB gets their attention.



1


Palani Palapala

1 review

★★☆☆☆ a year ago

Meaningless out of date company.



Like


Armand Ciabattari

5 reviews

★★☆☆☆ a year ago

I am very disappointed at the BBB for demonizing My Pillow. There is NOTHING deceptive about their advertising! This looks like harassment of a conservative businessman. So... who rates the BBB for deceptive practices?!


Barbara

7 reviews · 1 photo

★★☆☆☆ a year ago

These people have been unfair to My Pillow they should be ashamed of what they are doing to a USA company who puts 1500 people to work.



Like



Chris Fox

1 review

★★★★★ a year ago

The BBB just helped me resolve a situation with a Minneapolis Honda dealership. Without their help I am not convinced that I would have received fair compensation.



Adrienne Stanton

1 review

★★★★★ a year ago

I recently had an issue with my mortgage company. The BBB was able to help us both to resolve the issue within a couple of weeks! I was very happy with the outcome, and with the services that the BBB provided to me.

I would definitely use them again! Thank you BBB!



Michael Meier

16 reviews · 1 photo

★★★★★ a year ago

The BBB of MN/ND did wonders, and seriously changed my life as I recover from the double whammy of being widowed and a head injury. Those naysayers I see in the reviews simply do not understand the BBB mission; they are not a legal resource and have no obligation to take on every single complaint - it is a certain scope of cases they will take on, namely those in which the BBB can effectively take action.

In my case, I was having no luck getting a medical bill properly submitted to out-of-state Medicaid after an accident in Minnesota. The hospital followed through properly, but the specialist (a separate bill) was not willing to take on the extra workload required to get a Medicaid reimbursement. By working with the BBB, I was able to (a) get the provider to submit the bill to Medicaid and (b) enable the provider to get paid, because there's no way I could cover the \$5300 bill they were asking me to pay. A job well done!



Jon Jones

1 review

★☆☆☆☆ a year ago

DO NOT TRUST THE MINNESOTA BBB BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

BUYER BEWARE

The Minnesota BBB is a SCAM. They are a BULLYING, EXTORTION, RACKETEERING, business HOSTAGE taking CORRUPT and CROOKED business just like all its other locations. They screw small and large companies for not paying them some outrageous amount for a favored rating. The BBB is nothing more than an underground mafia that makes you "kick up" to be protected for a better grade. Don't be fooled by the BBB, you don't need them to survive. Read all the stories about the BBB's crooked operation on Time, ConsumerAffairs, RipoffReport, CNN, etc.. They are NOT the American business you think they are. All the BBB does is focus on NEGATIVITY and there is no validity that anyone using there site is an actual customer of the business so there reviews and so called "cases" SHOULD NOT BE TRUSTED.

MOST IMPORTANTLY the BBB site is NOT secure so when you go to use there site CLEARLY you can see in your browser that "This page is NOT secure" and "Your connection to this site is NOT private". Amazing how they are a supporter of "Cyber Security Summit" yet they are clearly putting their own users of their site at risk of data breach. TheFirstBBB in Minnesota should change that name to TheWorstBBB!

DO NOT CONSIDER BECOMING ACCREDITED AT THE BBB IN MINNESOTA OR ANY OTHER LOCATION. Judge for yourself, just watch the 20/20 video on the BBB.

YOU DO NOT NEED THE BBB!!! When they call just ignore them however keep in mind they will keep calling. The BBB is like a virus and they are relentless about getting you to pay them. Guess what? If you don't then your rating will drop to an F even though the truth is that you probably have amazing service with your customers. Their marketing to businesses is TERRIBLE! They will give you scare tactics on why you need them. Focus on other businesses review services and not this SLUM-SITE. The BBB will try and sell you that users can review your site positively however let's face it the business has a broken business model that is geared to get you NEGATIVE reviews.

I am telling you like it is folks. The BBB is NOT LEGIT. They are NOT here to help your business.

For those businesses in Minnesota that already know how crooked this BBB is we need to get together and shut down this location. The practices and thinking of the crunchy old personnel here have no clue about modern business.

The BBB views itself as a mediator between frustrated consumers and the companies they do business with HOWEVER in most cases the FAKE frustrated consumer is actually a crooked competitor of the business and the BBB uses the competitor against the legit business incorrectly. The BBB does a VERY poor job at mediating between the fake customer who is actually a competitor and the business being reviewed.

Do NOT answer the phone when the BBB calls and do NOT trust the reviews and cases that the BBB has on business.

DO NOT TRUST THE BBB!!!



Matthew Dunn

1 review

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ a year ago

Pointless acts



ronald bentley

7 reviews

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ a year ago

I am extremely disappointed in the Better Business Bureau. I filed a complaint about a transmission Shop in Lino Lakes Minnesota. The business in question did not honor their warranty appropriately and failed to complete a repair to my satisfaction after THREE attempts. The bureau simply dismissed my complaint as not being within their jurisdiction. I fail to see how, when a business does not render a service in good faith nor respond to warranty, as per mutual understanding of customer and proprietor, that the Bureau cannot see it's mandate in this matter. My case with Lenfer Transmission, the bureau and myself should have had more effort and the chance of an arbitration of some sort.

YouTube comments on 20/20 investigation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yo8kfV9kONw>



Kevin K 3 weeks ago

Always amazes me how liars stand up and defend themselves with more lies. BBB sucks!

👍 👎 REPLY



Rebecca Swanson 1 month ago

For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. 2 Tim 3:2

👍 👎 REPLY



Alex Martinez 1 month ago

This is the same guy who ripped on vivint because they got an F rating from vivint.... the news cant get their crap together

👍 👎 REPLY



robert13605 2 months ago

Dang the BBB literally supports terrorism and racism and pretty much admitted it on live TV .

👍 👎 REPLY



god is a Sciopath 2 months ago

only businesses that meet the highest standard, yep, it sounds like more sanctimonious socialism in america , dont forget to thank jesus

👍 👎 REPLY



god is a Sciopath 2 months ago

this sounds like the modern day mafia

👍 👎 REPLY



Mike M 3 months ago

BBB is a outdated fucking joke

👍 👎 REPLY



Ellen Reasonover 3 months ago

How do I get some one to investigate a car dealer ship ripping off elder people And the warranty company

👍 👎 REPLY



John Coyne 4 months ago

The BBB claims they only had one location selling grades but the reality is that all of their locations have an grading algorithm that ranks companies based on their participation with the BBB and, in the past, included a ratings boost to ANY company that paid the BBB membership fees. We've expressed repeatedly to the BBB that our company does not wish to be a paid member and does not wish to use their system for submitting complaints. We also believe they are violating the law by posing as a government agency: 18 U.S. Code § 912 - Officer or employee of the United States

"Whoever falsely assumes or pretends to be an officer or employee acting under the authority of the United States or any department, agency or officer thereof, and acts as such, or in such pretended character demands or obtains any money, paper, document, or thing of value, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both. (June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 742; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(H), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)"

Their use of the word 'Bureau,' is clearly deceptive, by their own admission. <https://youtu.be/kn5YiMjhdIM> No disclaimers on their website or marketing material that they are NOT a government organization. Violating the law? What do you think?

After this 20/20 report, they made a few changes. They removed the one location in California that they claim was the "ONLY" location selling grades. But, ALL of their locations lower grades if you don't submit documents.

We feel that NO company should be required to work with another private company or, if not, have their reputation destroyed. When, at the same time, they don't list all of the complaints submitted about their organization.

It is almost funny that they claim their organization was formed to vet out advertising but their own advertising is deceptive and misleading. While they claim they are stopping use of 'bureau,' there is no sign of that on their website and no disclaimers about what if any relationship they have with government agencies.

Show less

👍 👎 REPLY



777 777 5 months ago

The Better Business Bureau is a joke. A person of Middle Eastern in her late thirties decent named Julie Moore (Julie Potter BBB, non-American Middle Eastern birth name) once told me that she would get hired at the Better Business Bureau to decide complaints for businesses in every single instance. She only wanted to work for the Better Business Bureau to get back at people. Julie Potter is the name of a person deciding Central Indiana Better Business Bureau complaints. She

[Read more](#)

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Cavity Creep 5 months ago

It is a complete waste of time reporting unethical consumer rip offs to the BBB they do absolutely NOTHING! I have reported a couple of times i was ripped off to them including a car wash that ripped my mirrors off and broke my back window and they did nothing. There accreditation means nothing, it's as useless as used toilet paper. A sun dried turd in the yard is more valuable. It would be better to grab a weapon and handle things yourself. Pistol whipping bad business

[Read more](#)

👍 🗨️ REPLY



akoww1000 7 months ago

so this is where yelp got the idea to scam business out of money for better reviews

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Ben Grimm 7 months ago

The BBB is just there to placate the morons. It allows fascism to get a better foothold in our society.

👍 🗨️ REPLY



roger smith 9 months ago

IT is true they are all a scam.. and want you money

Example YELP TOO

if you put a half post and start paying them and pull out they bad rat eyou too
and Angieslist you pay to be a listed as well

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Άδωνις Βασιλείου 10 months ago

the BBB is a scam, nowadays at least.

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Neomis 01 1 year ago

People need to be educated on the BBB- Better Business Bureau, they are not associated, backed or affiliated with any government in any way. If you Wikipedia them, most but not all info is accurate, yes. they say "The BBB serves as an intermediary between consumers and businesses" thats all they DO, Period. the BBB makes money off of business's they cold call and send notices to Businesses for membership, I am on of these they tried to get money from, Before I had a business I tried to use them, a privately owned Jiffy Lube charged me \$250 for brakes, when I paid I looked at the prices posted as on the guys price chart, my car was nothing special... \$129 brake special in the lobby, they said it was cheaper brakes, I asked why they didn't offer me that, they had no answer. I went to another shop and had them check my brakes, they were generic cheap as you can get brakes, in fact the other shop said they don't even use brakes that cheap, they backed me up and gave me a quote with papers for the inspection, the owner of the shop even said "There is not a cheaper NEW brake then this model/Brand) I went to BBB with receipts and everything, the BBB did nothing, even the guy laughed when I said I'd go to the BBB, in which he had a big BBB logo on his door, I found out the hard way they literally DO nothing, and they aren't deputized or authorized to do anything except foreword what I say to the other Business, It's a total Scam.

Show less

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



wildmanbeyond 1 year ago

Jesus . you can't trust anyone nowadays .

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Garrett Waldrop 1 year ago

pay to play

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



Gwinnett Cobb 1 year ago

MONEY MONEY MONEY!

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Lu 1 year ago

In "less civilized" times, when you were wronged, you sought justice directly and usually someone paid in blood. Now, in civilized society, we have sh***t like this! Progress?!

👍 👎 REPLY



Wwef Wason 1 year ago

BBB = Bad Businesses' Brother

👍 1 👎 REPLY



Las Vegas Nights 1 year ago

why is society soo currupt Lord!

👍 👎 REPLY



Gary Vela 1 year ago

This is why we dont even bother being listed on the BBB, we would much rather spend our money on the local chamber of commerce.

👍 👎 REPLY



Overload 1 year ago

Just like almost everything else in this world. It's all about the money. We're stuck in this broken system called an "economy" that pushes people to do fraudulent and sometimes evil things to make a buck. Corruption is everywhere and will continue to be everywhere until we figure out a better way.

👍 👎 REPLY



vinny1010 2 years ago

Screw BBB, it's all about Yelp now

👍 3 👎 REPLY

[View all 2 replies](#) ▼



camaross 2 years ago

They have discredit my company online because one whacko says??? With no investigation,no credibility check??? They sent me a letter saying that I need to pay them a fee before moving forward. They are too cowardly to return calls.....right Alison??? manager Alison P of the Calgary branch???

👍 2 👎 REPLY



Ma Belle Vie 2 years ago

Liz's Antique Hardware currently does have an A+ even though her company is not BBB accredited. Wolfgang Puck, under different business names have either no rating, A or B ratings. This has definitely change the way BBB do business in its ratings. However, we use BBB along with other reviews of a company to get a general consensus and never use BBB as "the only benchmark" when checking out the credibility of a company.

👍 👎 REPLY



marie reyes 2 years ago (edited)

The BBB is worthless .

👍 1 👎 REPLY



ghostofmars83 2 years ago

The BBB is a joke! I contacted them, and the representative who was in charge of my case would not even call me back...

👍 6 👎 REPLY



Susan Keiser 2 years ago

WOW!!!

👍 1 👎 REPLY



Thomas Marsiglia 2 years ago

I filed a complaint with the BBB yesterday and an atty offered to take Yelp to court (pro-bono) for unfair labor practices. Funny how they allow false reviews, remove positive reviews but don't allow anyone to Review YELP... This business is pathetic and only cares about paying customers and profits..

👍 2 👎 REPLY



Benny Rodriguez 2 years ago

BBB you get an F unless off curse you sent me a check for \$350 LOL

👍 👎 REPLY



Rick Brenner 2 years ago

What a dick head liar! Every scam uncovered is a "mistake" and an "anomaly". This guy should be a politician :)

👍 2 👎 REPLY



Rick Brenner 2 years ago

Does this surprise anyone?

👍 1 👎 REPLY



Lord Proteus 2 years ago

Amusing, a company that is supposed to defend people from greedy, shady and evil corporations is one of the most greedy, shady and evil corporations of all.

👍 12 👎 REPLY

[View all 3 replies](#) ▼



Cloud Drifter 3 years ago

This is not an isolated issue! This is a private company overviewed by nobody! You complain about certain companies and you get ignored. Watch out with BBB employees who comment here, use your better judgement!

👍 1 👎 REPLY



Jim Hagerty 3 years ago (edited)

This was happening in the Los Angeles office. When it was discovered, the office was shut down by the Council of Better Business Bureaus. This practice is not common or advocated by anybody who works for the organization. This was an isolated incident that was dealt with harshly.

👍 2 👎 REPLY



will nemms 3 years ago (edited)

what good is the better business bureau if you file a complaint of a cable company like wow! charging people different amounts that to me is discrimination. I was charged more for internet than some people with a lot more services(because they got mad when I cancelled my cable). The better business bureau I am sorry we can't do nothing, except relay your message. A useless company in my opinion if they have no power to do anything.I wonder if a lot of companies pay them for their ratings.

[Show less](#)

👍 👎 REPLY



myloovideo 3 years ago

Just validates what an older sibling once told me,"If you want to see who has the power in a society, just follow the money trail !"

👍 2 👎 REPLY



bafoonkaiser 3 years ago
BBB = Older version of Yelp!

👍 7 🗨️ REPLY



mybeautypace 3 years ago
Mafia in a new version

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Steamer10600 3 years ago
I agree with the opinion that the BBB is like the mafia....Sorry about the association Mafia. YOU guys seem to be honest about what you do and how you do it...

To the best of my knowledge the BBB only reports the ONIONS, and not the good reviews. I know that after a company that
[Read more](#)

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Aubrey Kapree 3 years ago
Funny, I just got a link to this video from a company who currently has an "F" rating on the BBB. Turns out, after doing further research on this company, there are several complaints about them, even outside of the BBB. A prior company I also worked for also had an "F" rating, and they too explained how the BBB works and how they are just being extorted. However, come to find out, they were a very shady and scam company.
[Read more](#)

👍 3 🗨️ REPLY



Kwiz Matix 3 years ago
So this is how it works huh??? Enlightening! smh...

👍 🗨️ REPLY



David Mason 3 years ago
I'm having the same problem ,someone who wasn't a client of mine was allowed to file a complaint against me and then the BBB told me if I wanted to upgrade from an f after only being in business for three years and one complaint that isn't valid to begin with , I would have to pay them to change it .America the land of the slave

👍 🗨️ REPLY



Jody Highroller 3 years ago
BBB refuses to take any complaint about "A" rated companies that defraud customers. They simply state, over & over, that the BBB is not a collection agency & for you to take your complaint elsewhere. BBB is a joke & its "ratings" are useless.

👍 1 🗨️ REPLY



nozrati 4 years ago

The BBB is nothing but modern day mafia extortionist. They are con-artists and scammers. In fact, even on their own web site they post that if you are in litigation with a company who is a member of the BBB you CAN NOT post a complaint about them with the BBB. This is simply because companies who are BBB members are the BBB's assets and the one thing multimillion dollar companies do best is protect their assets. Therefore, in retrospect, the BBB is in business to

Read more

18 1 REPLY

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danceofthedruids 1 year ago

Well said! And the BBB to this day is still getting away with fraudulent ratings. We've had reviews and complaints expunged by dishonest businesses. Yelp and Amazon are doing the same - expunging negative reviews for their high sellers. I really wish 20/20 would follow-up on this unethical organization's activities.

1 1 REPLY



nozrati 1 year ago

Yelp is terrible. We started to get customers posting positive reviews about us and then their pushy salespeople started calling asking us to spend thousands in marketing with them. When we refused they started blocking all of our reviews. Amazon is trying to stop fake reviews but its own system says their not. I posted a review about a product and in the disclaimer wrote this was not purchased from Amazon. As soon as the review went through, Amazon wrote in bold letters next to my name VERIFIED PURCHASE. Reviews on any website are not 100% reliable. Complete total crap shoot.

Show less

1 1 REPLY



Telcom Techie 4 years ago

The BBB is a scam. I did business with a company with an A+ BBB rating and was scammed. I called and complained to the BBB regarding them as well as many others. The company retained their A+ rating even when they were out of business and selling services they knew they couldn't supply. BBB is a scam in itself.

4 1 REPLY



everett walker 4 years ago

I was cheated by an internet scam that claimed to be associated with Microsoft (Omnitech Support) I completed the online complaint process and when I pushed 'enter' a message " This Business is A+ Rated"blinkd on the screen and I was locked out of the system. Previous reports about this business remained on the BBB site but were dismissed as spurious by the BBB.

1 1 REPLY

View reply v



monirul alam 4 years ago

Who makes cash consistently though? My dad has been receiving \$265 a day with Online Gold Dynamo (search for it on Google).

1 1 REPLY



DBproductions 4 years ago

What? I've never though the BBB was a federal program.

1 1 REPLY



gal fawks 4 years ago

The BBB is just like the Federal Reserve, they are privately owned companies that purposely name their companies so most people believe they are a government run agency funded by tax dollars.

1 1 REPLY



Idchappell1 4 years ago

I knew something was wrong with the BBB when the Classmates web site got an A+ rating yet they have over 10,000 complaints and were successfully sued for \$9.3 million for fraudulent credit card practices. I will not longer pay attention to their grades because they're total bullshit.



REPLY



Thomas Dickensheets 4 years ago

Big Bad Business they call them self.



REPLY



iluvmusik iluvmovies 4 years ago

I had complaints with three different companies who all are members off the BBB. None of my issues were resolved. The BBB needs to close down. We should start a campaign to make the government close down the BBB. Is anybody with me???



REPLY



ThatGuyUSA 4 years ago

I agree and this RACKET has almost put my employer out of business. as a contractor everyone worships BBB as a standard of quality...and we always have to explain this during sales meetings to homeowners.. its a sad state of affairs



REPLY



Kaptain Krook 4 years ago

Make a complaint and they make you wait 6 weeks (cool off period) then they tell you what you already know.. they aint sh!t. But they are still in business.. it pays to be a crook. Sorry to break hearts



REPLY

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